Belding Area Schools

WEB SITE DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT

June, 2007

1. SUMMARY

Belding Area Schools of Belding, Michigan desires a partnership to design and develop the Districts Web site. This will be a concept to completion production.

The existing Belding Area Schools Web site was originally designed and produced in 1998 and modified slightly in 2004. The site is maintained with in-house resources.

2. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

The price you quote should be inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

If the execution of work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of subcontractors you must clearly state this in your proposal. Sub-contractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined. Please provide the name, address, and EIN of the sub-contractor. Belding Area Schools will retain the right to refuse the sub-contractors you have selected. All responses due by the end of the day on June 21, 2007.

3. CONTRACT TERMS

All contracts are subject to review by Belding Area School's legal counsel.

4. PURPOSE, DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Purpose

Belding Area Schools currently has a Web presence that is somewhat outdated in appearance, structure and in the presentation of content. An opportunity exists to re-engineer the site to better reflect the mission of Belding Area Schools and incorporate the latest Web technology. Upon completion of the development of the site, Belding Area Schools will assume full responsibility for Web site content maintenance and administration. All content, coding and graphics will become the sole property of the Belding Area Schools of Belding, Michigan.

Description

Create a flexible, informative Web site that is easy to maintain. We must develop a friendly site that can deliver large amounts of constantly changing information to our key audiences. In addition to designing a user-friendly site with an intuitive interface, we must also develop a Web-based, database-driven administration tool

that allows key management personnel to easily update content without directly accessing source code.

Belding Area Schools of Belding, Michigan will maintain ultimate editorial control of content, without burdening the districts departmental staff or significantly delaying the publishing of new information on the site. The Technology Department will efficiently manage the Web publishing processes, preferably by using a system with a browser-based user interface. Administration of Web content will be based on roles to control access and work flow (e.g. author, reviewer/editor, publisher).

To be effective, our Web site must be:
Easy and intuitive
Visually pleasing
Informative
Safe and secure
Quick to load and operate

Objective

Our primary Internet objective is to continue to build the Districts identity, awareness, and interest in the organization and the services it provides.

Our Vision

Maximize Web-based technologies
Enhance customer relationships
Improve program delivery and service
Provide focused Web-based solutions
Increase student enrollment

Specific Strategies

Increase awareness of Belding Area Schools mission and promote involvement through programs
Retain current members and program participants and gain new ones
Strengthen relationships with community partners, donors, members, program participants and staff
Attract qualified and diverse staff
Improve business efficiencies
Present comprehensive information and resources in an easy to use format
Increase site promotion activities

Integrate brand messaging
Deliver a consistent image
Deliver a scalable, maintainable foundation

In short we must tell our story through the use of compelling visuals, intuitive navigation, and concise messaging.

Make it easy

Redesign the site to deliver intuitive navigation, an improved graphical user interface, and easy-to-find content organization.

Make it compelling

Develop tools to deliver timely, relevant answers to the breadth and depth of questions.

Make it happen

Reinforce Belding Area School's opportunities for quality education and attract other families/students.

5. TIMELINE

We will require an interview at our office with our evaluation team on or about "Date to be determined"

All other time lines and project phases will be determined at the interview.

6. BUDGET

Please provide cost proposals to accomplish the scope outlined below. The budget must encompass all design, production, and software and hardware acquisitions necessary for development and maintenance of the Web site.

Hosting will be addressed separately and costs for hosting are not included in the budget for this project.

List pricing for:

Phase I: Discovery, Requirements Planning & Site Definition
Phase II: Site Development, Testing and Deployment
Hosting: We will be hosting on-site.

7. BACKGROUND OF ORGANIZATION

Our Mission

Belding Area Schools of Belding, Michigan is composed of people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds and religious affiliations united in sharing the values of education through programs that build strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

Overview

Belding is located in West Michigan along state highways M-44 and M-91, 25 miles northeast of Grand Rapids in the northwest corner of Ionia County. Belding has a population of 13,186 with businesses ranging from retail shops to manufacturing and extrusion firms. Hiking, horseback riding, fishing, camping, cross country skiing, golfing, jogging and mountain biking are among the many recreational activities available in Belding and surrounding Ionia County. Belding is located less than an hour's drive from the State Capital and Michigan State University. It is nestled in the very heart of Michigan's Farmland.

The population of Ionia County is 61,518. This includes 22,006 households having an average household income of $43,074. The median age of the population is 32.9 years old. The population is primarily white (91.96%) with 4.56% of individuals of African American descent, .56% of American Indian descent, .32% of Asian descent, .01% Pacific Islander, 2. 78% of individuals of Hispanic descent, 1.55% from Two or More races, 1.04% Other descent. The top industries are agriculture, services, manufacturing, retail trade, government, and construction. Eight percent of the population complete 4 or more years of college, 32.3% complete one to three years of college, 40.4% only complete high school, and 23% do not finish high school.

Belding Area School's proportion of students who receive free or reduced-plan lunch is approximately 48.2%. Belding has approximately 2400 students and is in the Class B OK Blue Sports Conference. The district has one High School, one Middle School, and two Elementary Schools.

It operates an Early Childhood Center which includes licensed pre-school, a four

year old program, Jumpstart, a pre-primary instructional program for the special education and Headstart.

The district provides alternative programs which include a teenage parent program, (TAPP) and Belding Alternative School of Education (BASE) for 16-18 year olds.

8. AUDIENCE

Audience groups:

Primary:
 Current employees, students, parents, and community members.

Secondary:
   Families moving into the area, Families shopping for educational value,
   Other districts, etc.

9. SCOPE & GUIDELINES

The scope of this project is to recreate the existing Web site. The District will provide all of the content and provide YOUR COMPANY with the most necessary original and stock photography. YOUR COMPANY must be able to handle all site planning, interface design and production. The site must include a technology solution that allows the in-house staff too easily and cost effectively update content and modify site design after the initial launch.

Discovery:

Confirm audiences, objectives, graphic look and feel, navigation, site marketing, technology issues and assumptions, required functionality, phasing, and budgetary constraints, resulting in a creative brief.

Design:

Web site information architecture, graphic look and feel, user navigation, home page and main navigation templates for each of the main navigation links.

Development Guidelines:

The Web site designed must meet the following criteria:

Create a content management system that will permit non-technical District staff to instantly update Web site content on specific pages.

Easily Updated – Once the site has been completed and accepted by the Belding Area Schools of Belding, Michigan, the site will be maintained by the Belding Area Schools Web editor using tools and applications agreed upon between YOUR COMPANY and Belding Area Schools.

Convert substantial amounts of existing content to new Web site.

Visually Appealing – The site must have an attractive mix of text and graphics.

Common Theme – Each section of the site should have a common look and feel.

Consistent Design – The use of photographs, fonts and layouts should be consistent throughout the site.

Easy to Navigate – The site should be easy to navigate. Information should be grouped and presented in a logical manner and require the least number of levels of "drill down" for the user to find the desired information.

Development of Web pages to accommodate the proposed navigation scheme.

Provide necessary software and licenses to maintain site internally or externally, as decided by the Belding Area Schools of Belding, Michigan. Note: due to educational pricing the District may purchase software and hardware specified by YOUR COMPANY separate from this contract.

Automated job posting feature.

The possibility of ecommerce technologies to be discussed.

Provide search capabilities using key words or phrasing that will identify content from throughout the site.

Gather e-mail, areas of interest and demographic information from visitors in a format that permits Belding Area Schools to maintain a single database of users and e-mail each according to their area of interest and profile. Provide training and all necessary support to permit easy use by the Technology Department of Belding Area Schools.

Project Management – An assigned project manager will be made available to present information and coordinate with Belding Area Schools, including a reasonable number of meetings to present design and development solutions.

Once the Web site has been completed and accepted by Belding Area Schools, the Web site design and all of its contents, software and architecture become property of the Belding Area Schools of Belding, Michigan.

Site Specifications:
Belding Area Schools encourages creativity in the project; however there are certain requirements for the Web site.

Site must be compatible with all current browsers (IE, Netscape, Safari, etc)
Web site must not require plug-ins as a default. (open for discussion)

Site must be easily accessible to the novice as well as the experienced Internet user.

Fast Loading Pages – The Web site must be designed with a balance of text and graphics such that each page loads in 8 seconds or less on the average computer (using a 56K modem).

Testing:
Testing of site on all applicable platforms to ensure Web site works as promised. Explain testing plan through development process (i.e. focus groups, etc.).

Delivery:
Delivery and uploading of site to client for internal hosting.

Tracking:
Implementation of tracking software to produce user defined site log reports. We need a tool to help us better understand and measure Web visitor behavior and improve Web site performance and availability.

Web traffic analysis
Path analysis
Visitor trends
Page views
Entry pages
Top pages
Exit pages
Page – length of stay
Technical analysis: browsers and platforms

10. AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES / INTEGRATION ISSUES

We will use much of our existing Web content. New content will be identified through interviews and user focus groups.
There are no existing databases that will need to be imported or connected to the new site.
We do have existing resources which this site must link to.

11. STAFF RESOURCES

A successful planning effort is driven by an interdisciplinary team of participants. The core team will be driven by two roles:

Project Lead: Responsible for sign-off on key decisions, providing project steering and maintaining relationships with Belding Area Schools Technology Department.

Project Manager: Responsible for keeping the project on schedule and within the budget. Maintains communication between other team members.

Other team members and content stakeholders will include:

Steering Committee / Task Force Content Committee

Member Advisory Team

12. QUALIFICATIONS

List the five Web sites your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project. Briefly list the role your firm played in each project. The URL should be submitted. Only sites that are live will qualify during evaluation.

Describe your experience in producing sites for non-profit and/or community-focused projects.

Provide current reference information for three former or current clients.

Briefly describe your firm's organizational capacity to produce our Web site (e.g. staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc.).

How many full-time staff does your firm employ? Please include a copy of your firm's organizational chart.

Provide a company profile, length of time in business and core competencies.

Briefly describe the percentage of your Web staff that would end of working on this project relative to your entire staff (using full time equivalents). For example, if you would use five staff on the project and you have ten Web designers and developers, the percentage would be 50%.

What type of team will be assigned to this project? What will each person's role be? Please include a brief background summary for each key staff member assigned to this project.

Briefly describe your firm's project management process.

Percent of total revenue derived from site developments and other business ventures.

Explain your business model.

Please discuss any hardware/software vendor partnerships.

Please discuss your testing and support plan.

Please explain your service level agreement structure.

Time frame for completion. The time frame for completion of the project will be evaluated. In addition, time frames will be part of the contractual agreement; therefore, a realistic time frame for completion is requested.

Process to include input from all program areas. Please state how you intend to communicate with all program areas to gather all of the required information.

Terms and conditions.